THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir. The contract for supply of 1500 Bogie Container Flat Wagons awarded to M/s. CIMMCO Birla Limited (CIMMCO) in January 1999 under the World Bank aided project was cancelled in October 2000 after M/s. Cimmco Birla Ltd. supplied 180 wagons only.

(b) The contract was cancelled as M/s. Cimmco Birla Ltd. failed to adhere to the terms of the contract.

(c) The advances paid were US$ 3 million and Rs. 20.78 crores against Bank Guarantees for equivalent amounts. The amounts of advance paid to M/s. Cimmco Birla Ltd. against the Contract were recovered from the Bank Guarantees. For other losses suffered by Container Corporation of India Ltd. (CONCOR) on account of the delay in supplies, CONCOR has preferred a claim on M/s. Cimmco Birla Ltd., which is pending before an Arbitration Tribunal.

Laying of OFC by Railtel

2165. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated amount required for completion of the project for laying optional (optical) fibre network;

(b) whether Railtel Corporation has approached the railway public sector undertakings to become equity partners to finance the project; and

(c) if so, the amount to be contributed by each of the undertakings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) The Detailed Project Report envisages an estimated expenditure of Rs. 2500 crore (approximately) for creation of 35,000 route km Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) based network.

(b) Yes, Sir. As per the decision of the Cabinet, Railtel Corporation of India Limited (RCIL) has approached Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) under the administrative control of Ministry of Railways to become equity partners.

(c) The Railway PSUs *viz.* Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC), Container Corporation of India Limited (CONCOR) & IRCON International Limited (IRCON) will contribute Rs. 100 crore, Rs. 25 crore and Rs. 25 crore respectively for taking RCIL's equity.